

PSOIDOS, PSODOS OR PSOLOS TREITSCHKE? (INSECTA,
LEPIDOPTERA): A REQUEST FOR USE OF THE PLENARY POWERS.
Z.N.(S.) 362

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Treitsche, 1825 validly introduced the name *Psoidos* for a genus of ash-coloured moths, listing five included species of which the first was given as "*alpinata* W.V. [i.e. Denis & Schiffermüller, 1775], Hubn., 197 (*equestrata* Fabr., . .)". Treitsche did not explain the name, which has no evident meaning, and there are no grounds for considering it worthy of emendation under Article 32 and it cannot be rejected as inappropriate under Article 18a.

2. However, Treitsche, 1827 renamed the genus "*Psodos*", giving a brief generic diagnosis and full redescription of the same included species. This time he did insert the terse explanation; "*Psodos*, πσoδoς, so viel wie σποδιος, aschfarbig". Three points are noteworthy in that cryptic remark. First, he used the separate Greek letters *pi* and *sigma* instead of the double consonant *psi* in the first word, showing that, for reasons of his own, he was deliberately transposing the single consonants. Such metathesis, although now unfashionable, was then by no means rare,¹ and in forming a name (as opposed to writing Greek) is perfectly legitimate. Second, it becomes evident that the name Treitsche originally meant to use was *Psodios*, not *Psoidos*; although that does not affect this case. Third, it is clear that Treitsche now chose the noun "*spodos*" rather than the less preferable "*spodios*" on which to base his name.

3. As author, Treitsche had every right to bestow whatever name he chose. Once published, he should not have changed it. But no doubt because the 1825 publication did not include a diagnosis, the name *Psodos* Treitsche, 1827 has been in use almost universally for over 140 years, and Duponchel designated a type-species for it as early as 1829. Although Sodoffsky, 1837 very reasonably but invalidly under our present Code, suggested the emendation "*Spodos*", he was not followed.

4. Then Berthet, 1938, 1950, first published and later submitted as an application to the International Commission, a case for emending the name *Psodos* to "*Psolos*", a different Greek word entirely meaning soot instead of ash, and having the adjective *psoleis*. Before that application had been published, the case had been debated twice by the Commission (1950a, b) and apparently approved, but there were obviously some doubts and no Opinion has been delivered nor entry made on the Official List. That whole case was abortive since the name *Psoidos* Treitsche, 1825 was never brought before the Commission. It is hoped that, at this late date, the case may be reviewed and *Psodos* Treitsche, the researched name and that in universal use, be preserved. The emendation *Psolos*, if finally accepted, apart from causing confusion, would sink the name *Psolos* Staundinger, 1889, currently valid for a genus of oriental

¹ Hübner, 1804 had already employed the name *psodea* for a dark Satyrid butterfly, presumably for like reasons. A close relative of it was later named *spodia* Staudinger, 1871.

butterflies; if not accepted it would date from Berthet, 1938 as a junior homonym of Staudinger's.

5. As to the type-species, Duponchel, 1829 (: 103-112) listed the 48 genera of Phalaenidae of which number 46 (: 112) was "*Psodos equestrata**". He explained (: 102) that the species name cited with it was the type-species and (: 101) that the asterisk denoted that Treitsche was author of the generic name. This designation was valid under Article 69a (1), the full citation of the name originally included as a synonym by Treitsche in 1825 being *Phalaena equestrata* Fabricius, 1777 (*Gen. Ins.*: 288). The oldest valid name subjectively applicable to the type-species is *P. quadrifaria* Sulzer, 1776 (an earlier subjective synonym *P. alpinata* Denis & Schiffermüller, 1775 being invalid as a junior primary homonym).

6. For these reasons it is requested that the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature:

- (1) validate under the plenary powers the emendation *Psodos* of the generic name *Psoidos* Treitsche, 1825;
- (2) place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the generic name *Psodos* Treitsche, 1825 (emendation of *Psoidos* under the plenary powers in (1) above) *Schmett. von Europa* 5 (2) : 434 (gender : feminine), type-species by designation by Duponchel, 1829 (in Godart, *Hist. nat. Lépid. France* 7 (2) : 112), *Phalaena equestrata* Fabricius, 1777, *Gen. Ins.* : 288;
- (3) place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the specific name *quadrifaria* Sulzer, 1776 (*Abgek. Gesch. Ins. Linn.* 1 : 162) as published in the binomen *Phalaena quadrifaria*;
- (4) place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology the generic name *Psoidos* Treitsche, 1825, *Schmett. von Europa* 5 (2) : 434 (Ruled under the plenary powers in (1) above to be an incorrect original spelling for *Psodos*).

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